



JUNE 2019

ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Monthly Newsletter



FORMING TRUE DISCIPLES THROUGH *GODTEENS*

When considering Christ and the way that He formed His own disciples, it wasn't in multitudes. Rather, Christ chose intimate encounters with chosen individuals – moments when He could speak to the person's heart, form their understanding, and prepare them for their particular mission. Scripture tells us clearly, "No disciple is superior to the teacher; but when fully trained, every disciple will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40). And this, says coordinator Lynette McArdle, is exactly what St. Peter Catholic Church seeks to emulate through its GodTeens (GT) Ministry.

"Our mission is to reach out to all high school students providing a place of community and growth where we can connect with God and with each other," Lynette says.

Available to all high school youth in 9th through 12th grades, GodTeens allows youth to meet weekly within intimate, grade-level groups where they can grow in fellowship with one another, receive mentorship from their GT leaders, and grow in their knowledge and understanding of the faith.

"It's been this amazing experience that has allowed



GodTeens provides a safe place where teens can flourish in their Catholic identity.

me to grow in my relationship with Christ and my relationship with others," says senior Kendall Scott, attesting to GodTeens' effectiveness. "I believe that through it, I've been granted the graces that have allowed me to become a more loving, caring and giving friend, sister, and daughter."

"You're involved with people your own age who also want to grow in their relationship with God," adds junior Laura Vrbka. "Every group is like a second family you

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GODTEENS

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER



GodTeens attendees coming together for some wholesome fun and fellowship.



GodTeens attendees enjoy fellowship and food with one another.

can lean on in times of need. This program really helps prepare you for the challenges you may come across in your adult life.”

GodTeens come together Sunday evening in the homes of their GT leaders throughout the school year. Meetings are typically 90 minutes consisting of prayer, conversation about the faith or topical teaching, as well as social time for teens to relax and enjoy one another’s company. In this way, says Lynette, teens are provided with a safe place, free from the pressures of everyday living where they can flourish as disciples of Christ.

“It gives them a ‘safe’ place to meet and just be themselves,” Lynette says. “They get away from homework, school, work, family pressures and get to relax with a group of like-minded teens and a great couple who are there for them as mentors. The group is a great place to discuss some of the issues of the day and how to look at them through the eyes of faith.”

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This allows teens to ponder and discover answers to their faith questions before they leave for college, better preparing them for adulthood. This is particularly essential in our current times, as young adults are faced with so many moral dilemmas.

“GodTeens helps our youth define their faith and I believe it helps them make it their own by talking about it, sharing it with others, and forming good routines and practices such as a prayer life,” Lynette says. “Instead of being told what to believe or what to do, the teens are able to take a critical look at things and adopt it for themselves.”

“It’s just a great way to get ready to start the new week,” adds junior John Blatchford. “I can reflect every week on progress in my own spiritual life while also meeting and forming new friendships.”

In this way, our youth are able to grow into active disciples as they blossom in the faith together.

If you would like more information about GodTeens, please contact Lynette McArdle at 402-430-9732 or lynette-mcardle@cdolinc.net.



A Letter from Our Pastor

TAKE VACATIONS FROM WORK OR SCHOOL, *NOT FROM GOD*

Dear Parishioners,

By now, many schools across America have let out for the summer. In almost no time, camp programs for younger students will be underway. Meanwhile, many older students are ready to trade their homework and notebooks for seasonal jobs until it's time to return to class in a few months.

Whether or not we're directly involved with schools — as students, teachers or parents — we find that the calendar for the school year also impacts our lives at work, at church and in our leisure time. And although some people are on vacation at any time of year, summer traditionally retains its place as the vacation season.

Vacations, no matter when or where we take them, provide us with a wonderful opportunity to refresh our lives by following a totally different daily pattern. Whether it's a day trip to the beach or hiking in the mountains, an excursion to the big city or a road trip out to the country, a visit to relatives or friends, or even a quiet and relaxing week spent at home, a vacation offers a break from our daily routines. We get to spend our time the way we choose.

A vacation also provides a good opportunity for us to make some permanent changes in our use of time. When we're free from the demands of everyday life, this



is a perfect chance to try something that is not part of our regular routine, such as spending a few minutes a day in prayer or meditation. "Try it — you'll like it!" as the old commercial said. It may have some lasting, positive results in fostering a stronger spiritual life.

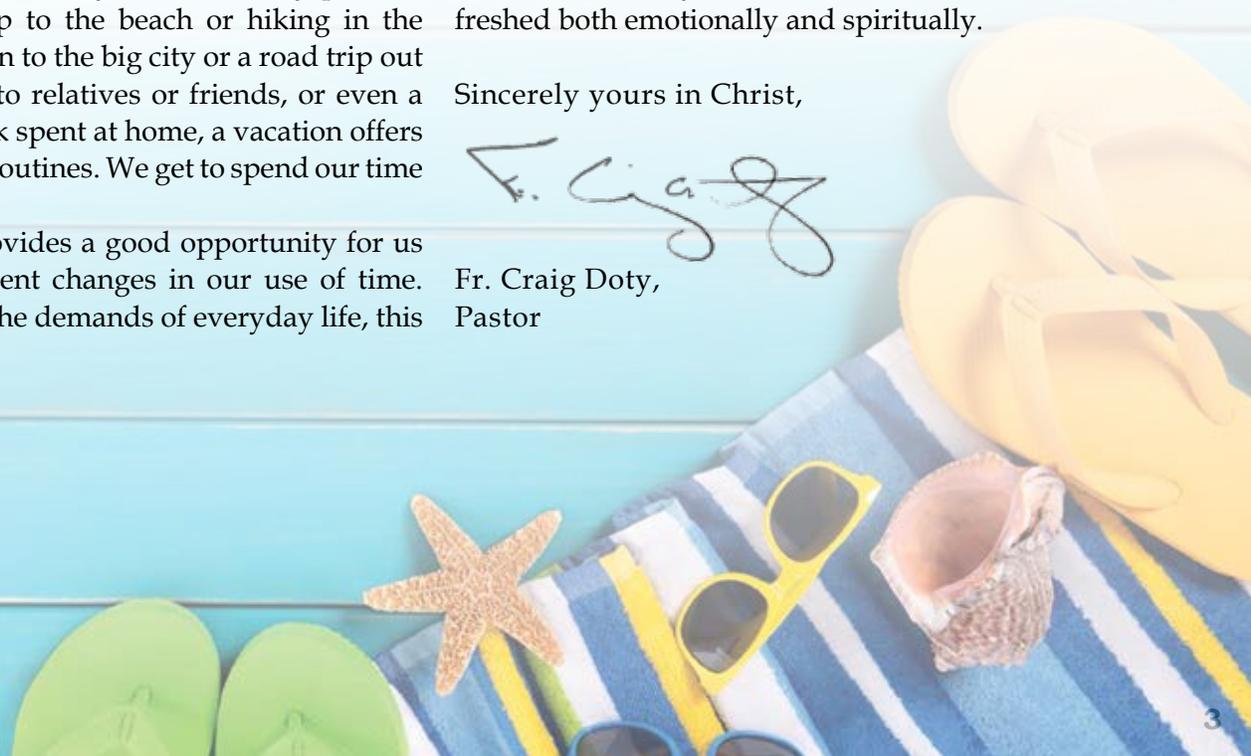
Importantly, we must also remember that this is a time of year when our parish will be welcoming visitors who are on vacation themselves — whether they are visiting family, spending time in the area, or just happen to be passing through on the way to their next destination. So, let us all uphold the Stewardship Pillar of

Hospitality and provide a warm welcome to those visiting our parish.

Be sure to worship at Mass, wherever you happen to be each Sunday. You'll come back from vacation refreshed both emotionally and spiritually.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Craig Doty,
Pastor





FACE-TO-FACE FUN: *THE FAMILY GAME MINIS*



When it comes to understanding the importance of spending time together as a family, we need only to look to the example of Jesus and Joseph.

“If you look at what Christ did growing up, He was a carpenter,” says parishioner Jeremy Lepper. “He was spending time with His father, learning a trade. He had face-to-face interaction on a daily basis with Joseph and working with His hands, Joseph saying, ‘Let me show you how this works.’ Board games, to a much lesser extent, are still face-to-face interactions – teaching resilience, good sportsmanship, and more.”

Jeremy, his wife, Kim, and their children, have always enjoyed playing board games. Recently, they decided to share the fun with others.

“People spend so much time in front of the television or at sporting events and there’s just not a lot of things where people can sit down with their family and do something *together*,” Jeremy says. “Board games are a really good way to get people together to interact, face to face.”

The group has held three events at the parish so far, with hopes of having a Sunday afternoon Family Game event every two months or so.

The Family Game Ministry is designed to appeal to the whole family, giving all family members the opportunity to enjoy an activity together.

“So often, even at events at the parish, the kids go off and do their thing and parents go off and do their thing,” Jeremy says. “We realized there’s not a whole lot of things for families to do together.”

“We have games that 2-year-olds can play, all the way up to 99-year-olds,” he adds. “We have our ‘Gamers in Training’ area, so little kids who want to play games can have fun with them

There’s something for family members of all ages at our bi-monthly Sunday afternoon board game events.



TRY.....

and it allows parents to sit down with older children and play a game that requires a little more thought. We truly want it to be something for the entire family to come and hang out.”

Above all, the goal of the Family Game Ministry is to bring families together and strengthen their relationships.

“My biggest hope is that parents are brought closer together, to one another and to their children and families,” Jeremy says. “We’re sitting down and doing something together and I can see my kids’ faces and they can see mine. I’m not on my phone, I’m not distracted by something else, and I’m interacting with them. It’s a big bonding thing – it’s so much fun.”

They also hope the group will build community in the larger parish.

“One strong family is there for another strong family and that ‘sharpen’ both of them,” Jeremy says. “There have been other families we’ve met in the community who are amazing and they’ve made our life better and they’ve said the same.”

“These were the things that they did in the early Church – people celebrated the Mass together and then they spent time in prayer and community,” he adds. “Our long-term goal is building up that sense of community within the parish.”

Jeremy encourages others to come and check out the fun, whether your family plays board games all the time, or you’ve yet to discover the hobby.

“Come up to the church and play some board games,” Jeremy says. “If you like spending time with other people, this is perfect for you. We have people who just show up, they don’t even play the games, they just enjoy being there and talking. Their goal is not to play to win, it’s to interact with other people. We have people who will teach you how to play a game and there are plenty of games that the mechanics are very simple, they’re easy to learn and they don’t take very long. If you want to come and engage your mind or just enjoy the social aspect, it’s a great place to be.”



The Family Game Ministry is a chance for families to have fun spending time together.



You are invited to come and check out the fun, whether your family plays board games all the time, or you’ve yet to discover the hobby!

*If you would like more information on the Family Game Ministry and upcoming events, please contact
Jeremy Lepper at
jeremyglepper@gmail.com.*



PRAYER:

BECOMING MORE GENEROUS WITH OUR STEWARDSHIP OF TIME

A professor stood in front of a class, and in his hand was a big glass jar. He put six big rocks in the jar, with the rocks up to the edge. He then asked his students, "Is the jar full?" And they replied, "Yes."

The professor told the students, "No, it's not." Then, he pulled out gravel and put it in the jar. He then asked, "Now is it full?" The students once again replied, "Yes." The professor responded, "No, it's not." He reached down and pulled out sand, which he poured into the jar with the same responses. Then, he reached down again for a pitcher of water, and poured water in, all the way to the brim. Then he asked, "Now is it full?" And the students replied, "Yes."

The professor then asked, "Okay, what lesson do you learn from this?" The students responded, "No matter how many things you've got in the jar, there's always room to put a little more in." The professor told them, "No, that's not the lesson. The lesson is, if I didn't put the big rocks in first, they would have never fit!"

Most Catholics can appreciate this story — in particular, how it can apply to our own prayer lives. Essentially, every person has to

decide what the "big rocks" are in his or her life. And, for us Catholics, prayer should be one of those big rocks in the jar.

As Catholics, we *know* that prayer is important, and we know that we can and should always pray more. Yet, connecting with God in this way often slips through the cracks of our busy lives.

The stewardship spirituality is about trying to become ever more generous with our Time, Talent, and Treasure. And there is a reason why "Time" is first in line. Time in a stewardship context refers to the time we spend with God in prayer. We need to take time to talk to God and take time to be quiet and seek to listen as He expresses His love for us and wants us to know His inspiration in our life.

There are many different forms of prayer — from weekly prayer, such as the Mass, to daily personal prayer. A daily Rosary is one of the most universal spiritual practices that can enrich the lives of Catholics around the world. Even if the decades are spread out throughout the day, or even if you pray just one decade a day, you will find yourself growing closer and closer to the Lord each time.

Morning and night prayer are also important disciplines to maintain. Set aside a comfortable place in your home where you can find silence. Maybe focus on a spiritual image and take time to center yourself with Scripture or some other kind of spiritual reading.

For many, spending large portions of the day in silent prayer may not always be possible. But make it a priority to find those moments of quiet throughout the day, and to find ways to incorporate prayer in the midst of your busy schedule. When you get into a vehicle, pray — before a meal, after a meal, if you're faced with a tough decision. Just pray!

Ultimately, the bottom line is this — just as in any human relationship, communication is a central aspect of a vibrant relationship with God. Prayer is fostering this communion of love with God. He loved us into existence and He wants us to enter into a loving conversation with Him. We've got to talk to Him. And we have to listen to Him. He will take care of everything if you just trust Him. He's knocking at the door and waiting for us to open it in prayer.





St. Thomas the Apostle was once unconvinced that the wounds Jesus bore after the Resurrection were real. As depicted here in Caravaggio's famous painting, Thomas puts his hand into Jesus' side and believes in the healing power of the Resurrection. Just like Thomas, we all have doubts from time to time and we are all in need of healing. The Healing the Whole Person Retreat will address the Doubting Thomas in us all when it arrives at St. Peter this July.

HEALING THE WHOLE PERSON RETREAT AND DAY OF EQUIPPING

AN ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST'S LOVE

Some people say that pain is a reminder that you're alive. In life, that pain can be not just physical, but emotional and spiritual as well. But what do we do when we've exhausted all our efforts to find a cure? Who do we turn to when the pain becomes too much to bear?

The Healing the Whole Person retreat is an opportunity for St. Peter parishioners and guests to experience the healing love that only God's peace can bring. Led by a team of presenters from the John Paul II Healing Center, the retreat will take place July 11 through 13 here at the parish.

Fr. Doty, who has personally experienced their retreats, says it is for adult men and women who wish to be affirmed in their identity as sons and daughters of the Father, as well as those who want to see healing deep within their hearts.

"They can expect to feel loved by God and loved by the team that is coming," Fr. Doty says of parishioners who choose to attend. "JP II has a lot of experience in

doing just that: facilitating the Holy Spirit's work of healing the whole person— heart, mind, body and soul. They're very gifted and very compassionate and very real."

During the retreat, participants will have the opportunity to hear from Dr. Bob Schuchts, author of *Be Healed: A Guide to Encountering the Powerful Love of Jesus in Your Life*. A number of parishioner groups have been reading *Be Healed* in preparation for the event. Much of the book's content will be discussed during the retreat, in addition to opportunities for prayer, confession and adoration.

Bart Schuchts, Bob's brother and a former defensive end for the Florida State Seminoles in the late 80s, will lead a separate event, a Day of Equipping.

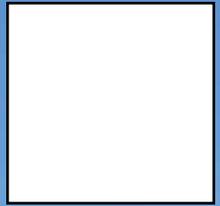
"Bart's Day of Equipping will be a very practical and encouraging day of hearing the voice of God and fearlessly praying for each other, even for physical healing," Fr. Doty says.

He expects to see many parishioners as well as guests

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ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH



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MASS SCHEDULE:

Saturday: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

DAILY MASS

Monday-Friday: 6:30 a.m., 8:15 a.m.

Saturday: 8:15 a.m.

CONFESSION:

Monday-Friday: 6-6:15 a.m., 7:45-8:00 a.m.

Saturday: 3-3:45 p.m.

RETREAT *continued from page 7*

in attendance based on the JP II Center's reputation for providing quality, dynamic retreats.

"We all need a healing and much of their work will be facilitating an encounter with Jesus Christ, the Divine Physician Who is the One Who came to heal all of us," Fr. Doty says. "I can speak from experience from having met the team and been very much transformed by their work and continuing to be in friendship with them. I consider them good friends and they have just blessed me tremendously by their help in my life."

"They can expect to feel loved by God and loved by the team that is coming. JP II has a lot of experience in doing just that: facilitating the Holy Spirit's work of healing the whole person—heart, mind, body and soul. They're very gifted and very compassionate and very real." — Fr. Doty

The Healing the Whole Person retreat begins Thursday, July 11, at 5:30 p.m. and continues Friday evening from 6 to 10 p.m., and Saturday from 8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Interested parishioners can learn more and register to attend at

www.jp2healingcenter.org/events/healing-the-whole-person-lincoln-ne/

Scholarships, and missionary and student discounts are available by emailing

LincolnHealandEquip@gmail.com

*Those who wish to attend the Day of Equipping, which will be held Friday, July 12, from 8:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., can visit ***www.jp2healingcenter.org/events/day-of-equipping-lincoln-ne/****